Pentagon report on war between India and Pakistan

1520. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent memo reported to have been issued by the Pentagon's national intelligence office circulated in the major U.S. Command Centres regarding the possibility of war breaking out between India and Pakistan involving chemical and nuclear weapons; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government with regard thereto stating the steps taken to dispel any misgivings in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Government have seen a report in this regard which appeared in "Inside the Air Force", a non-governmental defence publication in the U.S.

(b) Government have been informed by US authorities concerned that this report has no basis in fact.

Acquisition of SU-27 Fighters by Pakistan from Russia

1521. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:
SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in Indian Express dated 8th June, 1992 regarding PAK Air Force is considering acquisition of 60 sophisticated SUK HOI-27 (SU-27s) fighters from Russia in a bid to go in an edge over the Indian Air Force;

(b) whether it is a fact that if Pakistan Air Force decided to buy the Russia made SU-27, it could provide the much needed Air cover for launching an offensive deep inside India's border states; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government stating its impact on Indo-Pak, Indo-Russian relationship?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Acquisition of SU-27s by Pakistan would enhance the offensive capability of the Pak Air Force.

(c) Pakistan's continuous efforts to acquire sophisticated arms and equipment beyond its legitimate defence needs, is a cause of concern. Our views in this regard have been conveyed to the Russian Government.

Government constantly monitor all developments having a bearing on India's security and take necessary measure to safeguard it.

Taking over of Indian High Commissioner's residence in London

1522. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the British Government has decided to take over the official residence of the Indian High Commissioner in London;

(b) if so, whether the Government of India has protested against this and the reaction of the British Government thereto;

(c) whether an NRI has offered to sell his building to the High Commission; and

(d) if so, what is the decision of the Government in this regard and the other steps being taken to provide another house to the Indian High Commissioner in London?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Government are not aware of the British Government taking any decision to take over the Residence of the Indian High Commissioner in London.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Various offers of property in London have been received. The Government is, however, presently working towards extending the lease on the present Residence on a mutually acceptable basis.

Indian prisoners of war in Pak Jails

1523. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of Indian Prisoners of War languishing in several prisons in Pakistan till 30th June, 1992 indicating the total number of army officers, women alongwith other persons who were taken as prisoners during 1965 and 1971 wars with that country;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report from the Washington based Human Rights Organisation which appeared in Hindustan Times dated 5th July, 1992 to the effect that these prisoners were made to live not only in sub-human conditions but are also being tortured by Pakistan Jail Authorities mercilessly; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken so far for release thereof indicating also what is the number of Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails and the number of persons released by India so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) According to information available, 54 missing defence personnel are believed to be in Pakistani jails.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government have repeatedly taken up with the Government of Pakistan the question of their repatriation to India. The Government of Pakistan, however, maintains that there are no Indian defence personnel in its custody. We are continuing to press Pakistan on this issue. There are no Pakistani prisoners of war in Indian jails.

Discussion between India and Portuguese on assets of evacuee property

1524. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there had been discussions between the Indian and Portuguese authorities for the restoration of assets of evacuee properties;

(b) if so, when the final decision is likely to be arrived at in the matter; and

(c) what is the assessment of the evacuee properties left behind by the Portuguese national after liberation in 1961 and the value of the assets of Goans in Portugal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) The subject continues under discussion with Portugal and the determination of assets and liabilities of the two sides is being undertaken. The value of gold ornaments etc. returned from Portugal was Rs. 9 crores in 1991.